

WESTLAND IRRIGATION DISTRICT NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2021

**P.O. Box 944
Hermiston, OR 97838**

**Phone (541) 667-2030
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Dear Westland patrons,

As this newsletter is being written, snow is in the immediate forecast – and we need it! The most recent Oregon Water Supply Outlook Report from the Natural Resources Conservation Service shows a guarded outlook for water supplies this year; the current report can be found at this link: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/or/snow/> Our supplemental water supply source, McKay Reservoir, is in better shape than a number of other storage reservoirs around the state, but is also slightly below average for this time of year. The Bureau of Reclamation HydroMet webpage for Umatilla Basin storage reservoirs, including McKay, can be found here: <https://www.usbr.gov/pn/hydromet/umatilla/umatea.html> Lots can happen over the next two to three months to improve the irrigation season outlook for this year and we are cautiously optimistic at present.

On to District news...

DISTRICT TAKING STEPS TO IMPROVE WATER SUPPLIES

As reported in the last newsletter, the District has entered into agreements with Farmers Conservation Alliance (FCA) and Energy Trust of Oregon (ETO) to develop irrigation modernization strategies to benefit the District. In addition, a cooperative agreement with Umatilla County is being developed to take advantage of an opportunity which could bring water from the Columbia River to current patrons in the northern area of the District; this potential project is described more fully in the attached pages.

COVID-19

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation, the Westland Irrigation District office continues to be closed to the public for in-person service. A drop-box is available by the door for payments during regular business hours and staff will be working on-site to take calls and messages during the day. Options for accepting payments using debit and credit cards are being evaluated to better serve you as well. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

CHANGE AT DISTRICT OFFICE

After 20-plus years, District Manager Mike Wick has announced plans to retire. The Board of Directors is currently seeking qualified applicants and are coordinating through Special Districts Association of Oregon to fill this position. Job description and application are available at this link: <https://www.sdao.com/westland-irrigation-district-general-manager>

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Westland Irrigation District is collaborating with Farmers Conservation Alliance and Umatilla County on a project to bolster water deliveries to over 200 patrons in the District's north end, while also providing all patrons the opportunity to add to their water supplies. The Ordnance Regional Water Supply and Aquifer Restoration Project (Ordnance Project) will increase water supply reliability for irrigated acres, while also providing a ready water source for economic and environmental benefits.

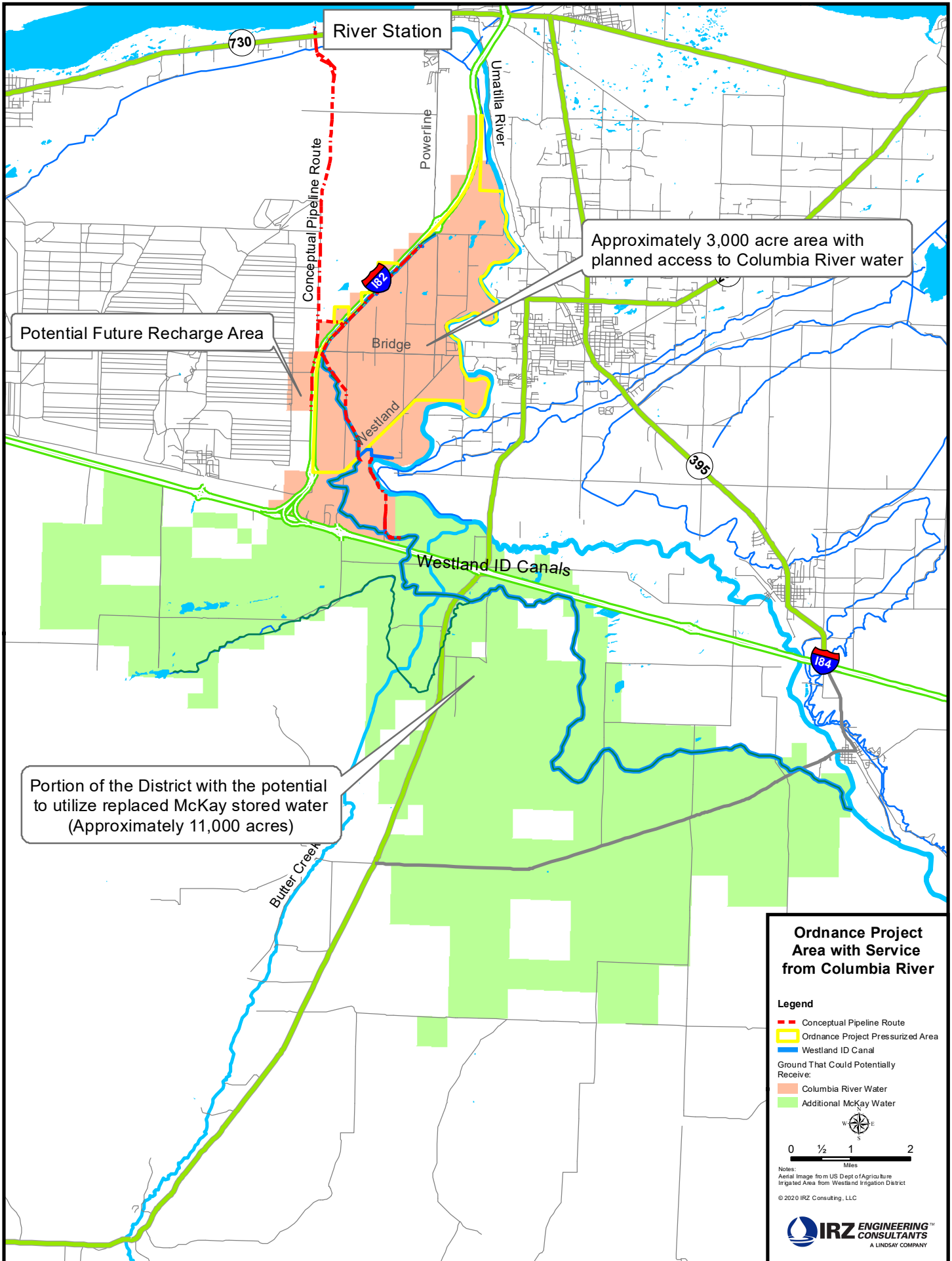
The opportunity for the project arose when the County entered into an agreement with Grimmway Farms to utilize a portion of its Columbia River intake facilities, with the stated goal of constructing a future new pipeline from there to an area near the east boundary of the former Umatilla Army Ordnance Depot. The pipeline location will allow for multiuse purposes as the former Depot and Westland Road area is developed, while also providing the ability for the District to access water for irrigation on 3,000 nearby acres it now serves.

The District's current water supplies come from early-season, snowmelt water from the Umatilla River and then later-season, stored water from McKay Reservoir, delivered to approximately 14,700 acres. Water is conveyed through 30 miles of canals and pipelines to 260+ patrons, with a majority living in the northern reach of the system on smaller acreages. When stored reservoir water is released for use, the conveyed distance increases by an additional 30 miles to reach those patrons in the district's north end, resulting in lowered delivery efficiency and increased system losses.

The Ordnance Project will utilize engineered piping to increase water delivery efficiency and reduce system losses, while pumps that match output with demand will keep power cost-effective. Total project cost is estimated at \$17 million, with a minimum of \$8.5 million coming from federal and state grants. The remaining balance will be financed through long term, low interest loans with repayment obligated to only those patrons who choose to participate in the project. It is important to note that the current allocation of water to District patrons will not decrease by implementation of this project, and the cost of water to District patrons will not increase by implementing the project. Only those patrons who choose to add to their current water supplies will incur additional charges.

The District is also working with Farmers Conservation Alliance to develop an irrigation modernization strategy to assist in evaluating how best to take advantage of this opportunity, as well as other potential improvements for increased water delivery efficiencies. The resulting System Improvement Plan will provide a blueprint for the District as it works to secure current and future water supplies for its patrons, as well as demonstrate how irrigation modernization projects provide broader environmental and community benefits.

For more information visit our website: <https://westlandirrigation.com>, or call the District office at (541) 667-2030.



River Station

730

Conceptual Pipeline Route

Powerline

Umatilla River

Approximately 3,000 acre area with planned access to Columbia River water

Potential Future Recharge Area

Bridge

Westland

395

Westland ID Canals

184

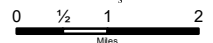
Portion of the District with the potential to utilize replaced McKay stored water (Approximately 11,000 acres)

Butter Creek

Ordnance Project Area with Service from Columbia River

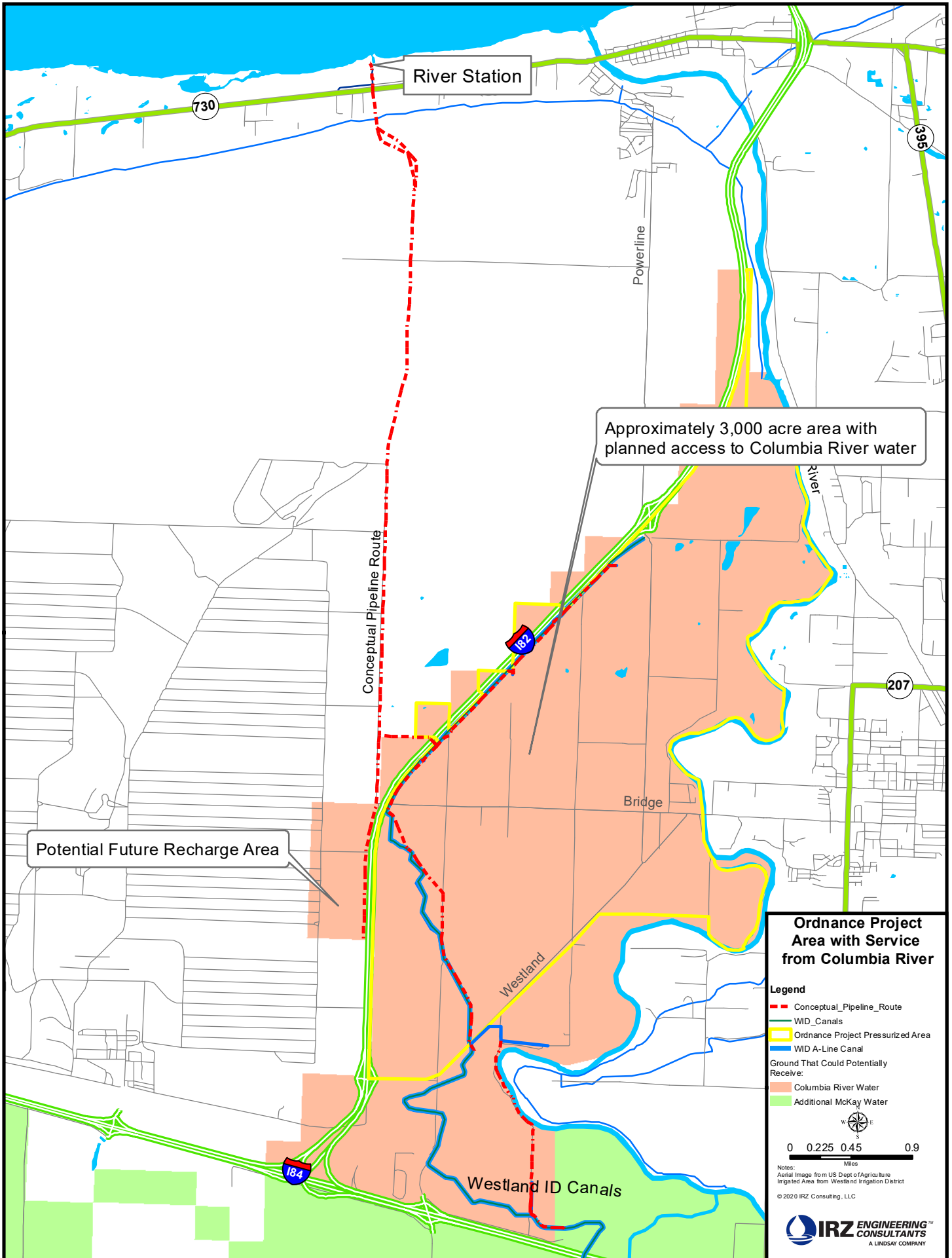
Legend

- Conceptual Pipeline Route
 - Ordnance Project Pressurized Area
 - Westland ID Canal
- Ground That Could Potentially Receive:
- Columbia River Water
 - Additional McKay Water



Notes:
Aerial Image from US Dept of Agriculture
Irrigated Area from Westland Irrigation District
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730

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Powerline

Approximately 3,000 acre area with planned access to Columbia River water

Conceptual Pipeline Route

182

207

Bridge

Potential Future Recharge Area

Westland

Westland ID Canals

Ordnance Project Area with Service from Columbia River

- Legend**
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